

CHAPTER 2

DRILL INSTRUCTIONS

“Troops who march in an irregular and disorderly manner are always in great danger of being defeated.”

Vegetius: De Re Militari: A.D. 378

Section I. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The progress made by individuals and units in precise and unified action in drill is determined by the following:

- The methods of instruction and the thoroughness of the instructor.
- The organization of soldiers into units of the most effective instructional size.

The three methods of instruction used to teach drill to soldiers are: step-by-step, talk-through, and by-the-numbers. The character of the particular movement being taught will indicate the most effective method to use. As a rule, marching movements are taught using the step-by-step method. Movements that require numerous or simultaneous actions by an individual or unit are best taught using the talk-through method. Movements that have two or more counts are taught using the by-the-numbers method.

To ensure that a soldier develops satisfactory proficiency during the time allotted, and to ensure a complete and consistent presentation by the drill instructor, each movement (regardless of the method used) should be presented using three teaching stages: explanation, demonstration, and practice.

2-1. EXPLANATION

In the explanation stage, the instructor must:

- Give the name of the movement.
- Give the practical use for the movement.
- Give the command(s) for the movement and explain its elements: the preparatory command and the command of execution. He must also discuss the command(s) necessary to terminate the movement. (Supplementary commands are discussed where appropriate in the explanations.)

This is how an instructor teaches a marching movement using the first teaching stage.

“Platoon, ATTENTION. AT EASE. The next movement (position), which I will name, explain, and have demonstrated, and which you will conduct practical work on, is the *30-Inch Step From the Halt*. This movement is used to march an element from point A to point B in a uniform manner. The command to execute this movement is **Forward, MARCH**. This is a two-part command: **Forward** is the preparatory command, and **MARCH** is the command of execution. The command to terminate this movement is **HALT**. **HALT** is also a two-part command when preceded by a preparatory command such as **Squad** or **Platoon**. I will use **Demonstrator** as the preparatory command and **HALT** as the command of execution. When given, these commands are as follows: **Forward, MARCH; Demonstrator, HALT.**”

2-2. DEMONSTRATION

In the demonstration stage, the instructor may use the step-by-step, talk-through, or by-the-numbers methods of instruction.

NOTE: The instructor may demonstrate the movement himself, modifying his position when necessary to maintain eye-to-eye contact with personnel being instructed.

a. **Step-by-Step Method of Instruction.** In the step-by-step method of instruction, the explanation and demonstration are combined, and the movements are taught one step at a time.

NOTE: The letters **P**, **I**, **C**, or **A** have been added to the end of certain paragraphs to help the reader understand the five-step process used in all marching movements known as the **PICAA** effect. Put simply, the **P**reparatory command, the **C**ommand of execution and the **A**ction step—executing the movement—are all given or executed when the same foot strikes the marching surface. The **I**ntermediate step and **A**dditional step are executed with the other foot.

(1) The instructor explains that on the command of execution, the demonstrator takes only one step and then stops in position until the command **Ready, STEP** (for the next step) is given. While the demonstrator is stopped in position, the instructor makes on-the-spot corrections and explains the actions to be taken on the next step. The instructor then has the demonstrator execute the movement at normal cadence.

(2) This is how an instructor teaches the demonstration stage when using the step-by-step method of instruction:

- **“Demonstrator, POST.** I will use the step-by-step method of instruction. On the preparatory command **Forward** of **Forward, MARCH**, without noticeable movement, shift the weight of the body onto the right foot. **Forward.**”
- “On the command of execution **MARCH** of **Forward, MARCH**, step forward 30 inches with the left foot. The head, eyes, and body remain as in the *Position of Attention*. The arms swing in natural motion, without exaggeration and without bending the elbows, about 9 inches straight to the front and 6 inches straight to the rear of the trouser seams. The fingers and thumbs are curled as in the *Position of Attention*, just barely clearing the trousers. **MARCH.**”
- “On the command of execution **STEP** of **Ready, STEP**, execute a 30-inch step with the trail foot. Once again, ensure that the head, eyes, and body remain as in the *Position of Attention*, and that the arms swing naturally, without exaggeration and without bending the elbows, about 9 inches straight

to the front and 6 inches straight to the rear of the trouser seams. The fingers and thumbs are curled, as in the *Position of Attention*, barely clearing the trousers. **Ready, STEP.** Notice that there are two steps explained: one from the *Halt* and one while marching.”

- “The command to terminate this movement is **HALT**. The preparatory command **Demonstrator** of **Demonstrator, HALT**, may be given as either foot strikes the marching surface. However, the command of execution **HALT** of **Demonstrator, HALT**, must be given the next time that same foot strikes the marching surface. The *Halt* is executed in two counts.”
- “On the command of execution **STEP** of **Ready, STEP**, execute a 30-inch step with the trail foot. When that foot strikes the marching surface, the demonstrator will receive the preparatory command **Demonstrator** of **Demonstrator, HALT. Ready, STEP. Demonstrator.**” (P—step 1 of the PICAA process)
- “On the command of execution **STEP** of **Ready, STEP**, execute a 30-inch step with the trail foot. This is the **intermediate** (or thinking) step required between the preparatory command and the command of execution. **Ready, STEP.**” (I—step 2 of the PICAA process)
- “On the command of execution **STEP** of **Ready, STEP**, execute a 30-inch step with the trail foot. When the foot strikes the marching surface, the demonstrator will receive the **command of execution HALT** of **Demonstrator, HALT. Ready, STEP. HALT.** The *Halt* is executed in two counts.” (C—step 3 of the PICAA process)
- “On the command of execution **STEP** of **Ready, STEP**, execute a 30-inch step with the trail foot, this being the **additional** step required after the command of execution. **Ready, STEP.**” (A—step 4 of the PICAA process)
- “On the command of execution **STEP** of **Ready, STEP**, bring the trail foot alongside the lead foot, reassuming the *Position of Attention*, thus terminating this movement. (**Ready, STEP. RE-FORM.**) At normal cadence, this movement would look as follows: **Forward, MARCH. Demonstrator, HALT. AT EASE.**” (A—step 5 of the PICAA process)
- “Platoon, what are your questions pertaining to this movement when executed at normal cadence or when using the step-by-step method of instruction? (Clarify all questions.)”
- “**Demonstrator, ATTENTION.** You will now become my assistant instructor. **FALL OUT.**”

NOTE: Notice that when marching, there are five steps in the step-by-step method of instruction: 1 - Preparatory command step; 2 - Intermediate step; 3 - Command of execution step; 4 - Additional step; and 5 – Action step.

b. **Talk-Through Method of Instruction.** In this method the explanation and demonstration are combined. Each movement or action by the individual is executed as it is orally described.

(1) The instructor simply tells the demonstrator how and what he wants him to do. The demonstrator executes the movement as the instructor describes it. Then the instructor has the demonstrator execute the movement at normal cadence.

(2) This is how an instructor teaches the demonstration stage when using the talk-through method of instruction:

- **“Demonstrator, POST.** I will use the talk-through method of instruction. On the command of execution **ATTENTION** or **FALL IN**, sharply bring the heels together and on line, with the toes forming a 45-degree angle. Rest the weight of the body equally on the heels and balls of both feet. The legs are straight without locking the knees; the body is erect; hips level; chest, lifted and arched; and shoulders, square and even. Keep the head erect and face straight to the front with the chin drawn in so that the alignment of the head and neck is vertical. The arms hang straight without stiffness. The fingers are curled so that the tips of the thumbs are alongside and touching the first joint of the forefingers. Keep the thumbs straight along the seams of the trousers with the first joint of the fingers touching the trouser legs. Remain silent and do not move unless otherwise directed.”
- **“AT EASE.** This position, executed at normal cadence, is as follows: **Demonstrator, ATTENTION. AT EASE. FALL IN. AT EASE.**”
- Platoon, what are your questions pertaining to the *Position of Attention* when executed at normal cadence or when executed using the talk-through method of instruction?” (Clarify all questions.)
- **Demonstrator, ATTENTION.** You will be my assistant instructor, **FALL OUT.**”

NOTE: When teaching squad, platoon, or company drills, this method should be modified so that individuals are talked into position rather than through the position.

c. **By-the-Numbers Method of Instruction.** *By-The-Numbers* is the command used to begin instructing one count at a time. *Without-The-Numbers* is the command used to terminate single-count instruction and return to normal cadence. The explanation and demonstration are combined. Movements are explained and demonstrated one count at a time.

(1) The instructor has the demonstrator execute the movement **by the numbers** (one count at a time). The instructor then has the demonstrator execute the movement at normal cadence.

(2) This is how an instructor teaches the demonstration stage using the by-the-numbers method of instruction:

- **“Demonstrator, POST.** I will use the by-the-numbers method of instruction. *Port Arms* from *Order Arms* is a two-count movement. On the command of execution **ARMS of Port, ARMS**, this being count one, grasp the barrel of the rifle with the right hand and raise the rifle diagonally across the body, ensuring that the right elbow remains down without strain. Simultaneously, grasp the rifle with the left hand at the handguard just forward of the slip ring, keeping the rifle about 4 inches from the belt. **By-the-numbers, Port, ARMS.”**
- “On count two, release the grasp of the rifle with the right hand and regasp the rifle at the small of the stock. Keep the rifle held diagonally across the body, about 4 inches from the belt, elbows drawn in at the sides, and ensure the right forearm is horizontal, thus assuming the position of *Port Arms*. **Ready, TWO.”**
- “*Order Arms* from *Port Arms* is a three-count movement. On the command of execution **ARMS of Order, ARMS**, this being count one, release the grasp of the rifle with the right hand and move the right hand up and across the body, approaching the front sight assembly from the right front, and firmly grasp the barrel without moving the rifle. Ensure the right elbow remains down without strain. **Order, ARMS.”**
- “On count two, release the grasp of the rifle with the left hand, and with the right hand lower the rifle to the right side until it is about 1 inch off the marching surface. At the same time, guide the rifle into place with the left hand at the flash suppressor, fingers and thumb extended and joined, palm facing the rear. **Ready, TWO.”**
- “On count three, sharply move the left hand to the left side as in the *Position of Attention* and, at the same time, gently lower the rifle to the marching surface with the right hand, assuming the position of *Order Arms*. **Ready, THREE.”**
- “At normal cadence, these commands (movements) are as follows: **Without-the-numbers, Port, ARMS. Order, ARMS. AT EASE”**
- “Platoon, what are your questions pertaining to *Port Arms* from *Order Arms* and *Order Arms* from *Port Arms* when executed at normal cadence or when executed by-the-numbers?” (Clarify all questions.)

- **“Demonstrator, ATTENTION.** You will be my assistant instructor. **FALL OUT.”** (Notice that there is no **Ready, ONE** command.)

2-3. PRACTICE

The practice stage is executed in the same manner as the demonstration stage except that the instructor uses the proper designator for the size of his element. However, the instructor does not have his element execute the movement at normal cadence until his element has shown a satisfactory degree of proficiency executing the movement using the selected method of instruction.

Section II. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES

Basic drill instruction includes line and U-formations, stationary and moving cadence counts, and dedicated instruction to units and individuals.

2-4. FORMATIONS

Instruction and practical work, in all phases of drill, can best be presented by using the U-formation or line formation. As a rule, stationary movements are taught using the U-formation; marching movements, to include squad, platoon, and company drills, are best taught from the line formation. Soldiers should be taught in the smallest formation possible to ensure individual attention; however, squad drill, whenever possible, should be taught to squad-size units, platoon drill to platoon-size units, and company drill to company-size units.

- a. The U-formation is formed by the instructor commanding **Count, OFF**.

(1) On the command of execution **“OFF”** of **Count, OFF**, all personnel, except the right flank personnel, turn their head and eyes to the right and the right flank personnel count off with **“ONE.”** After the right flank soldiers have counted their number, the soldiers to their left count off with the next higher number and simultaneously turn their head and eyes to the front. All other members of the formation count off in the same manner until the entire formation has counted off. The instructor then commands **First and second squads, FALL OUT**.

(2) On the command of execution **“FALL OUT,”** the first squad faces to the right, and the second squad faces to the left. After the squads have faced, the instructor commands **U-formation, FALL IN**.

(3) On the command of execution **“FALL IN,”** the following actions happen simultaneously:

- The first squad executes a *Column Left* and takes one more step than the highest number counted when the formation counted off; halts, and faces to the left without command.
- The second squad marches forward until the lead man clears the last vacated position of the first squad and then executes a *Column Right*, taking three more steps than the highest number counted when the formation counted off; halts, and faces to the right without command.
- The third squad stands fast, and the fourth squad executes one *15-Inch Step to the Left*. The instructor ensures that the first and second squads are one step in

front of and one step outside the flanks of the third squad before commanding **AT EASE** beginning the instruction.

(4) To re-form the platoon in a line formation, the commands are: **FALL OUT (pause); FALL IN**. The members of the platoon execute in the reverse manner as prescribed above, taking the same number of steps.

b. When instructing using the line formation at normal interval, it is recommended that the first rank kneels (right knee), second rank executes one *15-Inch Step to the Left* and kneels (left knee), third rank stands fast, and the fourth rank takes one *15-Inch Step to the Left*. The instructor adjusts any additional ranks as necessary to ensure they are uncovered. This formation can quickly be formed by commanding **Instructional Formation, MARCH**. To re-form the unit into a line formation, the command is **FALL IN**. The members of the platoon execute in the reverse manner as prescribed above.

c. The instructor may find using the extended rectangular formation more suitable for use.

(1) To form the extended rectangular formation, the instructor commands **Extend to the left, MARCH**. All right flank soldiers stand fast and extend their arms at shoulder level, elbows locked, fingers and thumbs extended and joined, palms facing down. All other soldiers turn to the left and double-time forward. After taking a sufficient number of steps, the soldiers stop and face to the front and extend their arms in the same manner as the right flank soldiers, ensuring that there is about 12 inches between all soldiers. Dress is to the right and cover is to the front. The remainder of the body is in the position of attention.

(2) The instructor then commands **Arms downward, MOVE**. The soldiers lower their arms sharply to the sides as in the position of attention.

(3) The instructor then commands **Left, Face**. All soldiers execute a left face.

(4) The instructor then commands **Extend to the left, MARCH**. All soldiers execute as previously described.

(5) The instructor then commands **Arms downward, MOVE**. All soldiers execute as previously described.

(6) The instructor then commands **Right, FACE**. All soldiers execute a right face.

(7) The instructor then commands **From front to rear, COUNT OFF**. (**COUNT OFF** is the entire command of execution). Each member of the first rank turns their head and eyes to the right and counts off with “**ONE**,” then faces back to the front. The remaining ranks execute in the same manner as the first rank counting off in the same manner as the first rank until the entire formation has counted off. The members of the last (rear) rank do not turn their head and eyes.

(8) The instructor then commands **Even numbers to the left, UNCOVER**. All even numbered soldiers jump squarely in the center of the interval, resuming the position of attention. The formation is now prepared for instruction.

(9) To return the formation to the original configuration, the instructor commands **Assemble to the right, MARCH**. All soldiers double-time to their original position in formation.

d. The instructor may find the circular formation more suitable for training.

(1) The instructor positions himself in front of the lead soldier in the lead squad and commands **Circle formation, FOLLOW ME**. The instructor double-times in a circle

large enough for the formation and moves to the center of the circle. The members of the lead squad follow at an arms length plus 6 inches (approximately 40 inches total). The squad leaders of the following squads begin double-timing at the correct distance from the last soldier in the preceding squad without command. After the entire formation is in a circle, the instructor comes to the position of attention and commands ***Quick time, MARCH***. The soldiers begin marching normally. The instructor then gives directives to individual soldiers and corrects the distance between them until each member is at approximately double arm interval.

(2) The instructor then commands the formation to *Halt* using the appropriate preparatory command.

(3) The instructor then commands ***Left, FACE***. All personnel face toward the instructor. The formation is now ready for instruction.

(4) To return the formation to its original configuration, the instructor commands the formation to attention and commands **FALL OUT**, and then **FALL IN**. On the command **FALL IN**, all soldiers return to their original position in formation.

NOTE: When conditions do not warrant this formation, soldiers may be directed to remain standing and to uncover. To assemble the unit, the command **FALL IN** is given.

2-5. INSTRUCTORS

When acting as instructors or assistant instructors, officers and noncommissioned officers go wherever they are needed. They correct mistakes and ensure steadiness and proper performance in ranks. When an individual shows that he is unable to execute the proper movements or assume the proper position, the instructor may physically assist the soldier.

2-6. CADENCE COUNTING

To enable soldiers to learn or maintain cadence and develop rhythm, the instructor should have them count cadence while marching.

a. To count cadence while marching at quick time, the instructor gives the preparatory command, ***Count Cadence***, as the left foot strikes the marching surface, and the command of execution, **COUNT**, the next time the left foot strikes the marching surface. The soldier begins to count the next time the left foot strikes the marching surface and counts as each foot strikes the marching surface—**ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR; ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR**. To count cadence while double-timing, the procedures are basically the same, except the soldier only counts each time the left foot strikes the marching surface. To maintain cadence when marching, soldiers will be allowed to sing, or a drummer's beat may provide cadence.

b. For stationary movements of two or more counts, the instructor commands ***In Cadence, Right, FACE***. The soldier simultaneously executes the first count of the movement on the command of execution and sounds off, **ONE**; as he executes the second count he sounds off, **TWO**.

NOTE: To halt execution of movements in cadence, the instructor commands ***Without Cadence***, and resumes normal drill methods. For example, ***Without Cadence***,

MARCH when marching at *Count Cadence* or *Without Cadence, Left*,
FACE for stationary movements.

c. As soldiers begin to master the art of drill, instructors try to create a spirit of competition among individuals and between units. Although repetition is necessary when teaching drill, instructors use competitive drill exercises to ensure that drill does not become boring or monotonous.

d. Mass commands are used to develop confidence and promote enthusiasm. They are effective in developing a command voice when instructing a leadership course. Procedures for using mass commands are discussed in Chapter 3.